

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S KEY PLAYERS

The Pope

The earthly leader of the Catholic Church and successor of the lead apostle, Peter.

Cardinals

High officials in the Catholic Church and counselors of the pope.

Bishops

Chief ministers who possess the fullness of the priesthood, their office is in direct succession to that of the apostles, they preside over a diocese, and submit to the primacy of the pope.

Priests

Ministers, coworkers of bishops, taking on supporting roles and sharing in the bishops' consecration and mission.

Deacons

Ministers of charity, administer certain sacraments, preach, and support the bishops and priests.

Religious Orders

Priests, Monks, Friars:

Men who commit themselves to a particular religious community with specific vocations and charisms.

Nuns and Sisters:

Women who commit themselves to a particular religious community with specific vocations and charisms.

Laity

Members of the Christian faithful who are not ordained clergy or religious.